is 1095 kms. and the estimated cost of development works is Rs. 542 Crore.

(c) and (d) No specific timeframe can be given in this regard at this stage.

New routes on National Highways network in Andhra Pradesh

1748. SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have added eight new routes, consisting of 1551 kms. in various parts of the country to National Highway network;

(b) if so, the details of routes/roads that have been identified in the State of Andhra Pradesh and the number of kms. that are going to be added to the National Highway network in Andhra Pradesh; and

(c) the criteria adopted in identifying the eight new routes in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI K.H. MUNIAPPA): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Recently eight new routes/roads have been declared as National Highways. No new National Highway in the State in Andhra Pradesh have been declared during this period. At present there is no proposal for declaration of National Highway in the country including Andhra Pradesh.

(c) One route has been declard as a National Highway as per the order of Hon'ble Supreme Court. Seven State roads meeting one or more criteria such as connecting important tourist and industrial centres, meeting strategic requirements, reducing travel distance and opening up of backward regions have been declared as National Highways in March and June, 2006.

Widening of NH No. 8

1749. PROF. ALKA BALRAM KSHATRIYA: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the approval of the project for widening the National Highway between Vadodara and Surat on NH No. 8 is still awaited from Government;

(b) if so, the reasons for the delay;

(c) the time bound programme for completion of the project; and

(d) Government's reaction on the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI K.H. MUNIAPPA): (a) and (b) No, Sir.

(c) and (d) It is expected that the work will be started by December 2006 and would be completed by June 2009.

Capacity of the Ports

1750. SHRI TARIQ ANWAR: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there is 10 percent growth rate in cargo at the ports;

(b) if so, whether we are able to handle the cargo after five years with the limited port capacity; and

(c) the possible steps Government are taking in this regard to increase the capacity of the ports?

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) Yes, Sir. The major ports in India achieved a growth of 10 percent or more during each of the last 3 years as given below:

Year	Cargo Traffic Handled (Million Tonnes)	Percentage growth
2003-04	344.80	10.0
2004-05	383.75	11.3
2005-06	423.41	10.3

(b) and (c) The aggregate capacity of the 12 major ports in India as on 31st March, 2006 is 456.20 million tonnes per annum (MTPA). Increase of capacity and improvement of the working of major ports in terms of handling of traffic in the country is an on-going process. Under the National Maritime Development Programme (NMDP) formulated by the Department of Shipping, a total of 276 projects involving development of berths, deepening of chanels, equipment upgradation/modernization, rail/